

# How to Order a Replacement “Report of Separation” Computer On-line/SF 180/Letter

Current as of: September 1, 2011

Your official “Report of Separation” is an important document that verifies active military service.

It represents one of the most important documents you may ever possess. This official separation form contains data needed to verify active military service. While many veterans recognize the official moniker for this document as the "DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," there are other official discharge forms as well depending on your period of service. Start the replacement procedure as soon as you discover you have misplaced or lost your original form. You can request a replacement form on line or by writing a letter.

Federal law [5 USC 552 a(b)] requires that all requests for records and information be submitted in writing. Each request must be **signed** (in cursive) and **dated** (within the last year).

Certain basic **information needed to locate military service records** includes the veteran's complete name as used in service, service number, Social Security Number (if applicable), branch of service, dates of service, date and place of birth. For records affected by the 1973 Fire, additional information such as place of discharge, last assigned unit, and place of entry into service may be useful.

## How Do I request Copies of Records?

### Option #1: Order On-line

- Go to the web site listed below or click on these words: “[Request Military Service Records](#).”

[www.archives.gov/veterans/](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/)

- Key in data and customize the form to fit your needs. Complete the four steps needed to navigate through the system. Prompts, by the system, will assist you.

Be sure to request an “[Undeleted Report of Separation](#).” This is what is commonly referred to as the “long” form.

Your on-line options for a DD214 look like this. The “[Undeleted Report of Separation](#)” option is already marked, so you do not need to change it.

REPORT OF SEPARATION (DD Form 214 or equivalent) This contains information normally needed to verify military service. Using this online system, a copy may be sent to the veteran or the deceased veteran's next of kin at this time.



I would like to request an [UNDELETED Report of Separation](#). This normally will be a copy of the full separation document including such sensitive items as the character of separation, authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and dates of time lost. An undeleted version is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits.



I would like to request a DELETED Report of Separation The following information will be deleted from the copy sent: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost.

- Print a copy of your form. Sign and date the form where indicated. The veteran or next of kin must sign each request for a replacement form DD214. A veteran's next of kin must provide proof of death of the veteran.

- **Mail the signed and dated “Signature Verification” form to:**

NPRC WEB  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis MO 63132-5100

- **Fax to:** 314-801-9049

- **Keep the “Copy of Signature Verification—Do Not Mail/Fax” form for your records.**

**Important:** If the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) does not receive your “Signature Verification” form within 20 days from the date of your computerized request, your request will be automatically deactivated and removed from our system.

- **Military Records:** [www.military.com](http://www.military.com)

**Tips & Warnings:** Avoid delay in replacing a “Report of Separation.” Double-check all information you provide for accuracy.

## **Option 2: Complete Standard Form 180—Request Pertaining to Military Records (SF180)**

Go to this web site complete the form (Adobe fillable form) or print a copy. It is three pages with the instructions.

[www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html)

[www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html)

Be sure to request an “Undeleted Report of Separation.” This is what is commonly referred to as the “long” form.

Although not mandatory, using the SF-180 is the recommended method to send a request for military service information. This form captures all the necessary information to locate a record. Provide as much information on the form as possible and send copies of any service documents that you may have.

**Note:** For the issuance and replacement of **medals and awards**, do not use the addresses on the SF-180. See Military Awards and Decorations for additional information on how and where to submit correspondence for issuance or replacement.

Requesters may:

- **Mail Standard Form (SF) 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records to:** Address listed in the “Records Location Table” section on the form.

- **Fax Standard Form 180 to:** 314-801-9195

**Tips & Warnings:** Avoid delay in replacing a “Report of Separation.” Double-check all information you provide for accuracy.

### **Option 3: Mail a Letter**

This is not the recommended method of request. Although not mandatory, using the SF-180 is the recommended method to send a request for military service information. This form captures all the necessary information to locate a record.

If you are not able to obtain a SF-180, you may still submit a request for military records. Requests must contain enough information to allow NRPC to identify the record from among the more than 70 million on file at the NRPC. For example, if you are requesting an Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), please include as much of the following information as possible:

- The veteran's complete name used while in service
- Service number or social security number
- Branch of service
- Dates of service
- Date and place of birth may also be helpful, especially if the service number is not known
- If the request pertains to a record that may have been involved in the 1973 fire, also include:
  - Place of discharge
  - Last unit of assignment
  - Place of entry into the service, if known.

**Please Note:** Next-of-kin (*the un-remarried widow or widower, son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister of the deceased veteran*) must provide proof of death of the veteran, such as a copy of the death certificate, a letter from the funeral home or a published obituary.

Be sure to request an **“Undeleted Report of Separation.”** This is what is commonly referred to as the “long” form.

- **Mail to:**

National Personnel Records Center  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

- **Fax to:** 314-801-9195

**Tips & Warnings:** Avoid delay in replacing a “Report of Separation.” Double-check all information you provide for accuracy.

## Emergency Requests and Deadlines:

If your request is urgent (e.g. upcoming surgery, funeral, etc.) and there is a deadline associated with your request, please provide this information in the "Comments" section of eVetrecs or in the "Purpose" section of the SF-180 and fax it to our Customer Service Team at (314) 801-0764. Our goal is to complete all urgent requests within two working days. However, in some instances we can complete requests the same day if necessary. Please contact our customer service staff at (314) 801-0800 if you have questions or require same day service. Due to the large number of calls we receive at this number, hold times are often long. However, once you reach a technician they will be happy to assist you with emergency service.

If your burial request involves internment at a Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery, contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at (800) 535-1117 or visit their website <http://www.cem.va.gov/bbene/need.asp>. We work directly with the Veterans Affairs staff to obtain records to verify service for burial benefits. If the veteran is not going to be interred at a National Cemetery, the requester may fax the SF-180 or signature page from eVetRecs (including signature of the next of kin and proof of death) to the Customer Service Team at (314) 801-0764. If your request involves the burial of a Marine Corps veteran, you may also contact the USMC Liaison Officer at (314) 538-2344.

**NOTE:** The 1973 Fire at the National Personnel Records Center damaged or destroyed 16-18 million Army and Air Force records that documented the service history of former military personnel discharged from 1912-1964. Although the information in many of these primary source records was either badly damaged or completely destroyed, often alternate record sources can be used to reconstruct the service of the veterans impacted by the fire. Sometimes we are able to reconstruct the service promptly using alternate records that are in our holdings, but other times we must request information from other external agencies for use in records reconstruction. In some instances

## Response Time and Checking the Status of a Request:

Response time varies and is dependent upon the complexity of your request, the availability of records and our workload. Please do not send a follow-up request before 90 days have elapsed, as it may cause further delays. While the NPRC works actively to respond to each request in a timely fashion, the Center receives approximately 4,000 - 5,000 requests per day. We are responding to requests for separation documents within 10 days about 92% of the time. However, requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the 1973 Fire, or older records which require extensive search efforts, may take 6 months or more to complete.

**Checking the Status of Your Request by E-mail:** Once you have allowed sufficient time for us to receive and process your request (about 10 days), you may check the status of your request by e-mail through our NPRC Customer Service Center at [mpr.status@nara.gov](mailto:mpr.status@nara.gov). Please provide the request number if you have one, the name, address and phone number of the requester and the veteran's branch of service to aid us in finding your request in our system. You will receive a return e-mail from us with a projected completion date for your request.

**Special Note on Calling by Phone:** If you have already submitted a request and need to know its status you may speak to a Customer Service Representative. Staff is available to take your call as early as 7:00 am CST and as late as 5:00 pm CST. Our peak calling times are weekdays between 10:00 am CST and 3:00 pm CST:

Telephone: 314-801-0800

Telephone (Toll Free) 1-866-272-6272

## Access to Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) - for the General Public

**Please note:** *the following information, regarding access, pertains only to records of veterans who separated from service after 1949. Access records of veterans who separated from service before 1950.*

### Access to Records, Information for the General Public:

Without the consent of the veteran or next-of-kin, the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) can only release limited information from the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) to the general public. You are considered a member of the general public if you are not the veteran, asking about a veteran who is of no relation to you or seeking information about a veteran who is a relative but for whom you are not the next-of-kin. The next-of-kin is defined as any of the following: *the un-remarried widow or widower, son, daughter, father, mother, brother or sister* of the deceased veteran.

Such access is intended to strike a balance between the public's right to obtain information from Federal records, as outlined in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and the veteran's right to privacy as defined by the Privacy Act. Information will not be released if requested for unethical purposes.

Different release procedures apply for records 62 years and older, see Archival Records.

### What Type of Information is Releasable to the General Public?

The type of information releasable to the general public from Federal (non-archival) records is dependent upon whether or not a person is requesting information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or has access authorization from the veteran or next-of-kin.

#### **With the Veteran or Next-of-Kin's authorization:**

The veteran (or next-of-kin if the veteran is deceased) must authorize the release of any information not available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). In some cases, the veteran may already possess military documents that contain the information you are seeking. The authorization must:

1. be in writing;
2. specify what additional information or copies that the NPRC may release to you; and
3. include the signature of the veteran or next-of-kin. A sample authorization is included for your review.

Please note: Next-of-kin must also provide proof of death of the veteran, such as a copy of the death certificate, a letter from the funeral home or a published obituary.

#### **Without the Veteran or Next-of-Kin's authorization:**

Without the consent of the veteran or next-of-kin, the NPRC can only release limited information from non-archival Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) to the general public. There is a list of information available under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Greater access is granted for records 62 years and older, see Archival Records.